



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
U.S. ARMY CONTRACTING AGENCY
HEADQUARTERS, NORTHERN REGION
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SFCA-NR-B

11 February 2005

Northern Region Contracting Policy Letter 1-1 (NR CPL 1-1)

SUBJECT: Preparation of ACA NR Contracting Policy Letters

Applicability. This policy letter supersedes NR CPL 1-1 dated 04 January 2005 in its entirety. This policy letter applies to all contracting activities of the Army Contracting Agency Northern Region. It also applies to contracting activities that are under the operational control of the ACA NR Headquarters. This document replaces the Northern Region Acquisition Bulletins (NRABs) and Contracting Operating Instructions (NR COIs).

1. **Purpose.** To establish the purpose, procedures, and format for preparing all Contracting Policy Letters related to contract policy within the Army Contracting Agency Northern Region (ACA NR).

2. **References.**

- a. AR 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence, 3 Jun 02.
- b. DA Pam 25-40, Administrative Publications: Action Officers Guide, 30 Apr 02.
- c. AR 25-30, The Army Printing and Publishing Program, 15 Jul 02.

3. **Definitions.**

- a. Contracting Policy Letter (CPL): A document created and used by ACA NR to disseminate to the workforce policy and administrative processes needing internal articulation and/or clarification
- b. Proponent: The proponent is the primary ACA NR subject matter expert involved in developing and writing the Contracting Policy Letter.
- c. Subject Matter Expert (SME): The SME is the ACA NR's resident authority on the content of the subject matter because of his or her role, responsibilities, duties, skill series, etc.

4. **Policy.**

- a. ACA NR's policy is to use the guidelines in references 2.a. through 2.c. to create a user-friendly system of Contracting Policy Letters to disseminate policy and administrative processing information to our workforce.

b. Anyone involved in preparing, writing, and publishing ACA NR CPLs must use as a reference the instructions in **Enclosure 1** and the sample in **Enclosure 2**. Together, these enclosures guide the preparation of CPLs both in format and content.

c. Numbering of NR CPLs will be indicated by the letters "NR CPL," followed by the Federal Acquisition Regulation (FAR) part number that has the greatest applicability, followed by a hyphen, then the sequence number within that FAR category, e.g., NR CPL 1-1 is the first NR CPL under a related FAR Part 1 (which explains the FAR system).

d. The Principal Assistant Responsible for Contracting (PARC) is the signature authority and the Alternate PARC has delegated signature authority as "FOR THE PARC" on all NR CPLs.

e. This NR CPL must be reviewed annually for changes and updates.

5. **Responsibilities.**

a. **PARC and Alternate PARC.**

1) Decides which policy and internal administrative processes need articulation and/or clarification as a Contracting Policy Letter.

2) Is the signature authority for CPLs as stated in paragraphs 4.d. above.

b. **Chief, Business Systems Division**

1) Recommends to the PARC any policy and internal administrative processes that need articulation and/or clarification as a CPL.

2) Assigns the procurement analyst within the Policy and Programs Branch to work with subject matter experts in writing the CPL.

3) Coordinates with appropriate NRHQ leaders for subject matter assistance.

c. **Subject Matter Expert (SME).**

1) Provides all content information on the subject matter of the CPL. The content information comes from the SME's expertise and experience related to the subject area.

2) Uses this CPL format to address all content elements. Should prepare a draft of the CPL. The draft needs to reference the pertinent regulations, pamphlets, instructions, letters, memoranda, etc., relating to the specific subject matter of the CPL being written.

3) Is the proponent for the CPL. As the proponent, the SME answers any questions related to the subject-matter content and process covered under the CPL.

4) Decides whether or not changes will be made to the CPL's content for those CPLs in which he or she is the proponent.

d. **BSD Policy Analyst.**

1) Assists the SME in researching and assembling content information for the CPL.

2) Provides oversight for the content and preparation of the CPL.

3) Responsible for the format and coordination of the final written product, as well as the incorporation of changes and updates to the CPL.

4) Is the proponent of the CPL when there is no designated SME.

5) Conducts the annual review of his or her respective CPLs.

e. **Policy and Programs Branch.** Oversees the CPL program in the following ways:

1) Maintains the index of, assigns the numbers to, and posts on the shared-drive all CPLs.

2) Oversees the execution of periodic reviews of all CPLs for currency and relevance.

6. **Proponent.**

a. The primary proponent for this Contracting Policy Letter is Mr. Bruce Cogossi, Chief, Business Systems Division, (757) 788-4681.

b. The point of contact for coordinating revisions or updating this Contracting Policy Letter is Ms. Mary Paige, Procurement Analyst, Policy and Programs Branch, (757) 788-3508.

2 Encl

1. CPL Format Guidelines

2. Sample CPL



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Responsible for Contracting

Enclosure 1

Contracting Policy Letter (CPL) Format Guidelines

The format for CPLs generally follows the format for DA Memos as outlined in Chapter 10 of DA Pam 25-40. This enclosure provides the general guidelines for preparing Contracting Policy Letters for the Army Contracting Agency Northern Region. It is followed by Enclosure 2, which is a sample CPL written in the prescribed format with each paragraph explaining the specific content within it. A template on letterhead is available on the ACA NRHQ R-drive in the Samples & Templates folder.

The guidelines for preparing CPLs are as follows:

1. **Paper.** Prepare them on ACA NRHQ letterhead, plain bond paper.
2. **Font.** Use Arial, size 12 font.
3. **Margins.** Allow one inch for the left, right, top and bottom margins.
4. **Office symbol.** Follow the guidelines in AR 25-50, para. 2-4.a.(1). The office symbol reflects the office of the person who prepares the document.
5. **Effective date.** The effective date of the CPL is the date it is signed. The date will be placed at the right margin on the same line as the office symbol. The date can either be stamped or typed on the document.
6. **Contracting Policy Letter title.** Spell-out the CPL's title followed by its number. Then place the CPL's short title, i.e., the NR CPL acronym and the CPL's number, in parenthesis next to the spelled-out title.
7. **Subject line.** Type the subject line on the second line below the CPL title line. Use only one subject and write the subject in 10 words or less, if possible. If the subject is more than one line, begin the second line flush with the left margin. Type the word "SUBJECT:" in capital letters followed by a colon.
8. **Applicability statement.** The applicability statement is part of the heading. It is bold-faced, but not underlined. It begins on the second line below the subject line.
9. **Paragraphs and subparagraphs.** This section begins the body of the CPL. It begins on the third line below the applicability statement. The following format for paragraphs and subparagraphs is in accordance with the guidelines in AR 25-50 (reference 2.a.), paragraph 2-4.b.(4) and Figure 2-1:
 - a. Designate main paragraphs by numbers, 1, 2, 3, etc. Main paragraph titles are bold-faced, underlined, and capitalized as sentence capitalization.
 - b. Designate first subparagraphs by lower case alphabetic characters. If there is a subparagraph "a," there must be a subparagraph "b."
 - c. Designate second subparagraphs by numbers in parentheses.

d. Designate third subparagraphs by alphabetic character in parentheses, but do not indent any further than the second subparagraph. Further indentation past the second subparagraph wastes space and inhibits the clarity and flow for the reader.

e. Do not subdivide beyond the third subparagraph. Subdividing a paragraph beyond the third subparagraph again inhibits clarity and flow for the reader.

10. Multiple pages. If a CPL is longer than one page, follow these rules:

a. Type the office symbol at the top and left margins (both one inch) within the "header." Next to the office symbol, place the CPL's short title in parenthesis. When the date is typed into the document, it will be placed on this same line at the right margin.

b. Type the subject of the policy letter at the left margin on the next line below the office symbol. Begin the continuation of the text at the left margin on the third line below the subject.

c. Use the "footer" to center the page number ½ inch from the bottom of the page starting on page 2.

11. Special effects. Use underlining and bold letters sparingly to emphasize a specific or important fact.

12. Authority Line. As stated in AR 25-50, para. 2-4.c.(1) and Appendix E, "When a person other than the commander signs military correspondence, an authority line is necessary to indicate that the correspondence expresses the will of the commander." Some rules are:

a. If the commander personally signs the document, then no authority line is used.

b. When a subordinate is authorized to sign on behalf of the commander, then the authority line is used. It is typed on the second-line below the last sentence of the body in all capital letters and followed by a colon. The authority line for NR CPLs will read "FOR THE PARC."

13. Signature block. Prepare signature blocks in accordance with AR 25-50, paragraph 6-4.

14. Enclosures. Enclosures are documents that support the basic policy letter. They are used to keep the body of the CPL as brief and concise as possible. If enclosures are needed, follow these rules:

a. Enclosures should be used sparingly, and all attempts should be made to reference important aspects of the documents rather than making them enclosures to the policy letter.

b. List enclosures at the left margin on the same line as the signature block in accordance with AR 25-50, paragraph 4-2.

c. Number all enclosures in the same order in which they appear or are discussed in the body of the CPL.

d. Enclosures will be formatted by placing the word "Enclosure" in bold-face followed by its number in the upper left corner of the first page of each enclosure (see the first page of this enclosure). On the second line below the word enclosure is the title of the enclosure in regular font. On the second line below the title begins the text of the enclosure. There is no specific format for the body of the enclosure. It can be used for text, lists, tables, instructions, flowcharts, and any other material that adds clarity to the CPL.

Enclosure 2

Sample CPL

The sample below is written in the CPL format and explains what information goes in each paragraph. It is intended to illustrate both the look and functionality of a CPL. This sample should be used to guide the preparation of ACA NR CPLs.

The actual CPL is prepared on ACA NRHQ letterhead.

SFCA-NR

Northern Region Contracting Policy Letter 1-1 (NR CPL 1-1)

SUBJECT: Preparation of an ACA NR Contracting Policy Letter

Applicability. The applicability paragraph identifies to whom the CPL applies. A short sentence or two may be added to more specifically identify the individual users and organizations the CPL applies to.

1. **Purpose.** The "purpose" paragraph is the first paragraph in the body of the CPL. It is an introduction stating the general purpose. The contents of this paragraph are the function, scope, and/or objective of the CPL. The function, scope and objective are to be stated in one brief paragraph without subparagraphs. For further guidelines and an example of a purpose paragraph, see DA PAM 25-40 (reference 2.b.), paragraph 10-19 *Purpose paragraph*.

2. **References.**

- a. References must be listed in the order appearing in the text of the CPL.
- b. References shall be cited by publication number, title, and date (e.g., AR 25-50, Preparing and Managing Correspondence, 3 Jun 02).
- c. Further guidelines are found in paragraph 1-31 of AR 25-50.

3. **Definitions.**

- a. Terms used in the Contracting Policy Letter should be defined in this paragraph if the meaning is not well-known or requires special explanation.
- b. Arrange terms in alphabetical order unless there is some compelling and logical reason to arrange them otherwise.
- c. Capitalize the first letter and each key word of a term, followed by its abbreviation or acronym in parenthesis.

4. **Policy.** NR CPLs will address the PARC's specific contracting policy guidelines for implementing contracting policies that need further clarification. Some guidelines for policy statements are:

- a. States the PARC's specific policy directives or guidance.
- b. Addresses the overarching intent or philosophy of the policy or procedure covered by the CPL. Policy statements should reference, or at least be linked to, the broader policy at DoD or Army level. ACA NR can more stringently implement the policy of higher authority, but cannot make it more lax.
- c. May address when the policy or procedure is used as well as thresholds, limitations or items not precluded.
- d. May address the overall outcome to be achieved by the policy or procedure.
- e. May address the organization's or senior authority's overarching responsibility. Conversely, it should not address responsibilities by position – these are addressed in the responsibilities paragraph.
- f. Should address how often the organization is required to review the Contracting Policy Letter for currency and relevancy.

5. **Responsibilities.**

- a. Identifies the key personnel who have overarching responsibility, or individuals that must carry out certain tasks or actions to execute policy or implement procedures.
- b. Provides the significant tasks performed by each of the key personnel. This format allows the user to go to just one section of the CPL to get a snap-shot of the tasks performed by each key person.
- c. Begin the first subparagraph with the most senior-level responsibilities, followed by the primary staff office or key person, then any other necessary support positions or offices.

6. **Proponent.**

- a. The first subparagraph should list the subject matter expert, who is also the proponent responsible for technical and policy matters contained in the Contracting Policy Letter. The subject matter expert is typically responsible for the content of the Contracting Policy Letter. The proponent must be a person, not an office (DA PAM 25-40, para. 3.12).
- b. The second subparagraph should identify the point of contact within the Policy and Programs Branch who is responsible for coordinating and updating the applicable CPL. In some instances, the same person may be responsible for content and coordination of the CPL.

SFCA-NR (NR CPL 1-1)

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FOR THE PARC: (Used only if signed by someone other than the PARC. If the PARC signs, then this line is not used.)

#	Encs	SIGNATURE BLOCK, Rank
1.	First Enclosure	Principal Assistant
2.	Second Enclosure	Responsible for Contracting
#.	Etc.	